

News from Ed Markey

United States Congress

Massachusetts Seventh District

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MARKEY, NORTHEAST LAWMAKERS URGE EPA TO UPHOLD POLLUTION STANDARDS

53 Representatives sign letter to Whitman opposing proposal to weaken health and environment protections downwind from coal-burning power plants

Washington, D.C. – Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-MA) sent a letter, signed by 53 Northeastern representatives, to EPA Administrator Whitman urging her not to weaken the New Source Review (NSR) program regulations which protect public health and the environment in the Northeast and the rest of the nation. Seven Republicans and 1 Independent joined 45 Democrats in pointing out the necessity of strong federal air quality standards for the recovery of forests and lakes in the Northeast and protection of the health of their constituents. The Northeast region has been working to make energy choices that secure both reliable energy sources and maintain public health, but due to prevailing winds, the Northeast is subject to air pollution from beyond the region.

“This letter is a clear message from the majority of the Northeast delegation that the New Source Review program must remain strong,” said Rep. Markey. “The Northeast is committed to improving regional air quality but we are at the mercy of the wind, which carries pollution to our region from the West. There must be strong national standards in order to protect the air quality of the whole nation.”

The letter emphasizes the impact of air quality on public health and especially the lung development of children. According to the Centers for Disease Control, each year in the United States outdoor air pollutants contribute to an estimated 50,000 to 120,000 premature deaths and \$40 to \$50 billion worth of health care costs. Furthermore, a study in the *American Journal of Respiratory and Critical Care* equates the damage to children's lungs from poor air quality to the damage caused by smoking.

“We expect the EPA to protect our children from pollution that fills their lungs with the poisons and particulates produced by power plants; not protect the thousands of plants and facilities from cleaning up their acts. We have the technology to protect health while providing energy efficiently— this is no time to compromise the well-being of children, the elderly and other vulnerable populations around and downwind from the smokestacks,” said Markey.

Representatives signing the letter: Markey (D-MA), Olver (D-MA), Neal (D-MA), McGovern (D-MA), Frank (D-MA), Meehan (D-MA), Tierney (D-MA), Capuano (D-MA), Lynch (D-MA), Delahunt (D-MA), Johnson (R-CT), Larson (D-CT), Simmons (R-CT), DeLauro (D-CT), Shays (R-CT), Maloney (D-CT), Allen (D-ME), Baldacci (D-ME), Kennedy (D-RI), Langevin (D-RI), Sanders (I-VT), Cardin (D-MD), Cummings (D-MD), Morella (R-MD), Wynn (D-MD), Israel (D-NY), McCarthy (D-NY), Ackerman (D-NY), Crowley (D-NY), Meeks (D-NY), Nadler (D-NY), Owens (D-NY), Weiner (D-NY), Towns (D-NY), Velazquez (D-NY), Rangel (D-NY), Serrano (D-NY), Engel (D-NY), Lowey (D-NY), McNulty (D-NY), Hinchey (D-NY), Slaughter (D-NY), LaFalce (D-NY), Saxton (R-NJ), Andrews (D-NJ), Pallone (D-NJ), Pascarella (D-NJ), Rothman (D-NJ), Payne (D-NJ), Holt (D-NJ), Roukema (R-NJ), Smith (R-NJ), and Menedez (D-NJ).

Please refer to our website for a copy of the letter, www.house.gov/markey.

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